A new incentive scheme has been finalised to improve the productivity of the operators.

An extensive rehabilitation programme for replacing old worn-out and life expired equipment has been undertaken.

A massive expansion programme has been undertaken to relieve congestion in the network.

Memorandum regarding Extension Programme of Himalayan Timber College, Imphal

1729. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Memorandum regarding Extension Programme of the H.T.T. College, Imphal under Centrally sponsored scheme has been received by Government;

(b) if so, what are the main demands made therein; and

(c) whether Government have taken any action on the Memorandum?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) The Department of Education of the Ministry of Human Resource Development has not received any such Memorandum.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Indian Students studying Abroad

1730. SHRI JERLIE E. TARIANG: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian Students studying in other countries; and

(b) whether Government propose to raise the amount of scholarship to students for studying in other countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) According to available informatinon, about 42,288 Indian students are at present studying in foreign countries of whom 364 scholars are studying on Government of India scholarship.

(b) The rates of scholarship payable to students studying abroad on Government of India Scholarship were last revised by Government with effect from 1st April, 1986 as follows:

Undergraduate courses from US $4500 p.a.

M. Tech/Ph.D from US $ 5000 to US $6000 p.a.

There is no proposal to further increase these rates.

Evil practice of Devdasi

1731. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that more than 100 young girls were converted into Devdasi at Yellamma Hill in Belgaum District of Karnataka on Maghi Poornia day despimte enforcement of Anti-Devdasi Act; and

(b) if so, what action Governent propose to take against this evil practice still prevailing in various Southern States of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) We have seen the press report. Further information is being collected from the State Government of Karnataka.